



St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church



Sunday, June 9th, 2019

Sunday of the Holy Fathers of the 1st Council

**The Most Reverend Metropolitan
JOSEPH, Primate Antiochian Orthodox
Christian Archdiocese of North America.
The Right Reverend Bishop ANTHONY,
Auxiliary Bishop
V.Rev. Fr. John Alassaf, Pastor
(330) 907-5811
yohanna-1965@hotmail.com
*Every Sunday:
Matins 9:30 AM
Divine Liturgy 10:30 AM*
St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church
3204 Ridgewood Rd., Akron OH 44333
Ph: 330-666-7116/Fax: 330-666-8292
mail@stgeorgeakron.com**

Rev. Protodeacon Joseph Harb
Rev. Deacon James Reale
Sub-deacons: Sam Snyder & Samer Zawahri
Church School Director: Julia Shaheen,
Kh. Corinne Mahshie & Jan Kattouf
Parish News Coordinator:
Kh. Rania Alassaf (330)-907-9151
Choir Director: Kim Shama Hanna
Youth Director: Dr. Bill Shaheen
Web Master: Melissa Aramouni
Arabic Chanter: Tanios Tabanji
TLC Catering: Joe Catalano
(330)-607-4360 or joe@tlccateringinc.com

Greeters: Mike & Diane Pancoe
Epistle Reader: Mike Eid

Acolytes:
VOLUNTEERS

CHRIST IS IN OUR MIDST” / “HE IS AND EVER SHALL BE” THE COMMUNION PRAYER

I believe, O Lord, and I confess, that thou art truly the Christ, the Son of the Living God, who didst come into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. And I believe that this is truly Thine own immaculate Body, and that this is truly Thine own precious Blood. Wherefore, I pray Thee, have mercy upon me and forgive my transgressions, both voluntary and involuntary, of word and of deed, of knowledge and of ignorance; and make me worthy to partake without condemnation of Thine immaculate Mysteries, unto remission of my sins unto life everlasting. Amen. Of Thy Mystic Supper, O Son of God, accept me today as a communicant; for I will not speak of Thy Mystery to Thine enemies, neither will I give Thee a kiss as did Judas; but like the thief, will I confess Thee; Remember me; O Lord in Thy Kingdom. Neither unto judgment nor unto condemnation, be my partaking of Thy Holy Mysteries, O Lord, but unto the healing of soul and body.

Holy Bread Of Oblation for Today's Divine Liturgy is offered by:

- The Dallas family for the health of Kh. Corinne Mahshie on the occasion of her birthday.
- John & Joyce Simon family for the health of Marlene Elzeer.
- Pat & Sherry Vitone family in memory of Anna Vitone.
- Atef & Teresa Haddad family.
- Walid & Victoria Qaqish family.

Holy Remembrances are offered for the health of:

Wafigah Zawahri family, Edmund & Geri Farris, Frank & Gladys Chirakos, Tom McLaughlin, Karen Dodovich, Hoda & Gina Jabbour, Shaun & Kathy Curley, Olga Yogmur, Wendy Simon, Dany Nader, Christian Simon, Dawn Shaheen, Sophia

(Quiet prayer at the altar) Holy Remembrances at the Table of Oblation for the health of:

Fr. George Shalhoub, Fr. George Elsoury, Margaux Yerian, John Dodovich Family, Hala Zawahri, Paul Megois, John & Joyce Simon, George Tebcherani, Connie Kenney, Joseph Kelley, Michael Peludat, Carl Massouh, Wafigah Zawahri, Bonnie Dallas, David Welling, Micheline Debs, Rose Farah, Elie Eid, Deacon Joe Harb Family, Freda Corbin, Mary Smolinski, George & Georgette Zabaneh Family, Keith Yerian, Richard Morrow, Marsha Lindsay, Tony Jaber, Celia Kulmala, Sophia Britton, Kristen Sage, Daisy Salem, Jihan & Hamodeh Albanna, Madeleine Khoueiry, Kelsey Thompson, Bob & Flo Howell, Susan Bogunovich, John Bourjaily, Mildred Halamay, Norma Kakish, Botros Kerro, Elie Sherfan, John Mashni, Helen Zimmerman, Sadie Kannam, Marie Saïdy, Carl Moore, Habouba Rahbani, Greg Kattouf, Wagdi Anton, Antoine Aramouni, Gerald Hanna, Jackie Wilson, Vincent Alexander, Antoinette Jabbour, Isaac & Gamalat Gaid, Ghassan Ashkar, Jackie Shama, Larry Kobbs, Dr. Richard Esper, Jordan Miller, Bentley Licitiri, Kathy Velikoff, Neda Zawahri Serhan, David Aramouni, Patty Sue Jones, Inyas Markarian, Violet Carey, Patricia Hanna, Alexandra Eid, Afaf Halasa, Sandy Mahshie, Bryan Caley, Lamia Harb, Suzette Saadeh, Rosemary McLaughlin, Sub-Deacon David Tomey, Joe Gabel, Robert Denious, Regina Salloum, Karen Horattas, Jim & Suzie Hanna, Mary Lou Simon, Lurice Halasa & David Pilversack.

Holy Remembrances are offered for the Repose of the Souls of :

Nick Shaheen, Norman Elias Sr., Eleanor Alexander, Raymond Matthews, George Zagaib, Sr. & Joseph Haddad.

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION (TONE 6)

When Mary stood at Thy grave, looking for Thy sacred body, angelic powers shone above Thy revered tomb. And the soldiers who were to keep guard became as dead men. Thou led Hades captive and wast not tempted thereby. Thou didst meet the Virgin and didst give life to the world, O Thou, Who art risen from the dead, O Lord, glory to Thee.

ENTRANCE HYMN Come, let us worship, and fall down before Christ. Save us, O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead; who sing to Thee. Alleluia

APOLYTIKION OF THE ASCENSION (TONE 4)

Thou hast ascended in glory, O Christ our God, and gladdened Thy Disciples with the promise of the Holy Spirit, making them confident through the blessing that Thou art the Son of God, and Deliverer of the world.

APOLYTIKION OF THE HOLY FATHERS (TONE 8)

Thou, O Christ, art our God of exceeding praise Who didst establish our holy Fathers as luminous stars upon earth, and through them didst guide us unto the true Faith, O most merciful One, glory to Thee.

TROPARION – HYMN OF ST. GEORGE

As deliverer of captives and defender of the poor, healer of the infirm, champion of kings, victorious Great Martyr George, intercede with Christ our God for our soul's salvation.

KONTAKION OF THE ASCENSION (TONE 6)

When Thou didst fulfill Thy dispensation for our sakes, uniting the terrestrials with the celestials, Thou didst ascend in glory, O Christ our God, inseparable in space, but constant without separation, and crying unto Thy beloved: I am with you, and no one shall be against you.

DONATIONS:

BUILDING FUND:

\$5000	Gary & Leslee Salhany in memory of all the parishioners that served in the Armed Forces
\$100	Charlotte Shaheen
\$100	Habib & Regina Salloum
\$50	Anonymous in memory of Norman Elias, Sr.

NEEDY FAMILY FUND:

\$30	William & Bonnie Dallas
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CAMP FUND:

\$50	Anonymous for the health of Fr. John and his family
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THE EPISTLE

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our Fathers. For Thou art just in all Thou hast done.

The Reading from the Acts of the Apostles. (20:16-18, 28-36)

In those days, Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he might not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hastening to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost. And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the church. And when they came to him, he said to them: "Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God which he obtained with the blood of his own Son. I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore, be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish everyone with tears. And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities, and to those who were with me. In all things I have shown you that by so toiling one must help the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" And when he had spoken thus, he knelt down and prayed with them all. (Amen)

THE GOSPEL

(For Sunday of the Fathers of the 1st Council)

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. John. (17:1-13)

At that time, Jesus lifted up His eyes to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Thy Son that the Son may glorify Thee, since Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom Thou hast given Him. And this is eternal life, that they know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent. I glorified Thee on earth, having accomplished the work which Thou gavest Me to do; and now, Father, glorify Thou Me in Thy own presence with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was made. I have manifested Thy Name to the men whom Thou gavest Me out of the world; Thine they were, and Thou gavest them to Me, and they have kept Thy word. Now they know that everything that Thou hast given Me is from Thee; for I have given them the words which Thou gavest Me, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from Thee; and they have believed that Thou didst send Me. I am praying for them; I am not praying for the world but for those whom Thou hast given Me, for they are Thine; all Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine, and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to Thee. Holy Father, keep them in Thy Name, which Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, even as We are one. While I was with them, I kept them in Thy Name, which Thou have given Me; I have guarded them, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to Thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves." (Glory to Thee O Lord, Glory to Thee)

CALENDAR

Sun., June 9th	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sunday of the Holy Fathers of the 1st Council.• Basketball/Volleyball is Cancelled
Tues., June 11th	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parish Council meeting 7:30 PM.
Wed., June 12, 19 & 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bible Study with Frank Chirakos 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM @ Our Church.
Sun., June 16th	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sunday of the Holy Pentecost.• HAPPY FATHER'S DAY.• Antiochian Village Camp 1st Session begins.
June 19th – 22nd	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest Parish Life Conference. (Check p.7)
Sun., July 3rd	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sunday of All Saints.
Mon., July 24th	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feast of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist.
Sat., July 29th	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feast of Saints Peter & Paul, the Holy Apostles.
Sun., July 30th	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feast of All Saints of North America.

SERMON

The Ascension of our Lord

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

So thursday we have the Feast of the Ascension of Our Lord. Thus we have come to the last day of Christ's physical presence on Earth. This marks the fulfilment of all things, since His Conception at the Annunciation to the Holy Virgin, His Birth and all the events of His earthly life, recorded for us in the Gospels. Christ came down from Heaven in order to destroy the power of Satan over mankind. Christ was crucified and rose from the dead in order to destroy death. Christ ascends into the skies in order to raise up fallen human nature to the heights of Heaven. But He ascends not as He came down.

He ascends taking with Himself a human body, a human soul, a human mind, a human will, all the attributes of human nature, except of course for sin, for Christ's human nature is human nature as it was first intended to be, not fallen human nature, but human nature redeemed and made all comely. The ascension of Jesus in this context becomes a celebration of the extraordinary fact that our humanity in all its variety, in all its vulnerability, has been taken by Jesus into the heart of the divine life. 'Man with God is on the throne,' that hymn goes on. Quite a shocking line if you start thinking about it.

And that of course is first of all good news about humanity itself – the humanity that we all know to be stained, wounded, imprisoned in various ways; this humanity—yours and mine—is still capable of being embraced by God, shot through with God's glory, received and welcomed in the burning heart of reality itself: to the throne of Godhead, to the Father's breast. But let's pursue that theme just a little bit further. Jesus takes our human nature—yours and mine—to the heart of God and he speaks to God his father in a human voice. In heaven the language they speak is human (not just angelic). Our words (human words) are heard at the very centre of the burning heart of reality.

But all of that in the saint's thinking arises from this basic insight: Jesus ascends to heaven. The human life in which God has made himself most visible, most tangible, disappears from the human world in its former shape and is somehow absorbed into the endless life of God. And our humanity, all of it, goes with Jesus. When St Paul speaks of Christ 'filling all in all', as we heard in the epistle (Ephesians 1.15—end), we must bear in mind that picture: Jesus' humanity taking into it all the difficult, resistant, unpleasant bits of our humanity, taking them into the heart of love where alone they can be healed and transfigured.

the Ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ! As human life has been restored by the Resurrection, our true homeland on high has been established by the Lord Christ's Ascension. As Saint Gregory Palamas writes, "Neither an angel nor a man, but the Incarnate Lord Himself came and saved us, being made like us for our sake while remaining unchanged as God. In the same way as He came down, without changing place but condescending to us, so He returns once more, without moving as God, but enthroning on high our human nature which He had assumed.

It was truly right that the first begotten human nature from the dead (Rev. 1:5) should be presented there to God, as firstfruits from the first crop offered for the whole race of men."There is only pure joy in this feast of the Lord for where He goes we hope to follow. In the words of Saint John Chrysostom, "This is the Lord of glory Who is ascended into the heavens with a shout, and is seated on the right hand of the Father. Under His authority are angels, and dominions and powers, and it is He Who receives our pained prayers, and makes us victors over the pirates of this world. Under His dominion is every rank of the unclean spirits, as He says to us: 'Behold, I have given you authority to trample upon snakes and scorpions.'" **Amen.**

Fr. John

CONGRATULATIONS! The Sacrament of Holy Baptism for Giovanni Albanna, son of George & Jihan Albanna, taking place today, Sunday, June 2nd following Divine Liturgy. Proud grandparents are Malek & Fadia Albanna and Hammoudeh & Faten Albanna. His Aunt is Joanna Albanna and his Great grandmother is Jihan Albanna.



CONGRATULATIONS to **Paul Iskandar & Alexandria Debs** on the occasion of their marriage that took place in Lebanon, Saturday, June 8th, 2019. **Alexandria** is the daughter of Tony & Mirna Debs, sister of Andrea, Anthony & Angela and granddaughter of the late Chaker & Micheline Debs.



May God Grant them many years!



Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest Parish Life Conference

Hosted by: St. Nicholas Church; Urbana, IL.
University of Illinois Newman Center.
Holiday Inn Champaign Suites ~ June 19 - 22, 2019.

The Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest Parish Life Conference ("PLC") is less than two weeks away so please make your reservations today!

The PLC will be held at the Holiday Inn Champaign Suites from June 19 - 22, 2019. The negotiated room rate is \$104.99/per night/per room.

Orthos, Divine Liturgies, Bible Bowl, Oratorical Festival and so much more!

For more information and to check the schedule for all the wonderful events on the Parish Life Conference, please visit: www.antiochianevents.com/toledo.htm



THE HOLY COMMUNION SPOON

A concern often expressed by certain Orthodox Christians who attend the Divine Liturgy on Sundays and who receive the precious Body and Blood of our Lord, is having to share the same Communion spoon with others. Indeed, as concelebrating clergy commune from the same chalice, so too do the lay people commune from the same spoon. A fear often verbalized is contracting infection or germs or some other disease by coming into contact with another person's saliva or lipstick that may come off on the spoon when receiving Holy Communion. The question I would like to address in this article is: Is there any reason to fear such a possibility?

The immediate answer is no. From a purely microbiological perspective, the sweet red wine used in Communion is typically high in alcoholic content. This means that the chances of bacteria or germs surviving in it are virtually minimal to non-existent. Although each of us communes the Body and Blood of Christ, the invisible microbes that may enter our mouths from the previous communicant are harmless. From a purely experiential perspective, every chalice on Sundays is consumed in its totality by the priest, after several mouths have communed from it.

No priest, including the writer of this column, has ever become ill or incapacitated after consuming the Holy Gifts. And finally, from a purely spiritual perspective, the Holy Gifts are exactly that: they are sacred, in that they have become imbued with the fullness of God's presence and grace, and they are divine (not human) gifts, "for every good and perfect gift is from above, coming from [You] the Father of lights" (Prayer behind the Amvon in the Divine Liturgy).

If we truly believe in God, we know quite well that God would never allow harm to come to us, most especially in the reception of Holy Communion. There is no fear then of disease, when receiving Communion, we may simply open our mouths wide and allow the priest to 'drop' the Communion into our mouths, thus not allowing the spoon to make contact with our mouths and it is important for us to wipe our mouths well after receiving Holy Communion. This prevents the elements from accidentally dripping onto the ground.